

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-18 are pending after entry of this amendment.

Claims 1, 5, 6, 10, 11, 14, and 15 have been amended. No new matter is believed added by amendments to the claims. Indentation has been added in some of the claims to more clearly show the structure of the claims.

Claims 5-6 and 14-15 are objected to by the Examiner. However, there appears to be no substantive rejection of these claims in the Office action. Hence, the Applicant assumes that these claims are allowable if written in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claim 9 is indicated as being allowable if written in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claims 1, 10, and 11 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C § 102(a) for alleged anticipation by U.S. Patent No. 6,480,488 (the Huang patent).

Claims 2-4 and 12-14 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C § 103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,480,488 (the Huang patent) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,787,070 (the Gupta patent).

Claims 7-8 and 16-18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C § 103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,480,488 (the Huang patent) in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,614,945 (the Brunius patent).

Claim Objections

The Applicant thanks the Examiner for indication of corrections needed for claims 5-6 and 14-15. In addition, as mentioned above, the Applicant assumes, in the absence of any substantive rejection of these claims, that the claims are allowable if written in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Accordingly, claims 5-6 and 14-15 have been amended by presenting them in an independent form including the elements of the base claim and all intervening claims. Further, the informalities pointed to by the Examiner have been corrected to address the objection. Claims 5, 6, 14, and 15 are believed to be condition for allowance.

Allowable Claim 9

The Examiner indicates that claim 9 is allowable if written in independent form including all limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. *Office action, page 2.* However, in the Office action at the bottom of page 7, the Examiner asserted grounds for rejecting claim 9 as being obvious.

The Applicant submits that claim 9 recites allowable subject matter. Moreover, for the reasons discussed below, the Applicant submits that base claim 1 is allowable, and for this additional reason, claim 9 is believed to be allowable.

Nonetheless, the Applicant requests clarification as to the allowability of claim 9 so that appropriate action can be taken.

Claim Rejections based on 35 U.S.C § 102

As a threshold matter, the Examiner is respectfully reminded that:

For anticipation under 35 U.S.C § 102, the reference must Teach every aspect of the claimed invention either explicitly or impliedly. Any feature not directly taught must be inherently present. (Emphasis added; MPEP 706.02).

Claims 1, 10, and 11, as amended, recite in pertinent part,
...wherein a connection configuration determines the number of input and output terminals between the transfer means and the search means; and
wherein a data size transferred between the search means and the transfer means is configurable based on the connection configuration.

In an illustrative embodiment of the present invention, the search means and transfer means are connected to each other via multiple input and output terminals. Accordingly, several different connection configurations between the transfer and the search means are possible. For example, a single transfer means can be connected to a single search means, multiple transfer means can be connected to a single search means, or a single transfer means can be connected to multiple search means. (See Fig. 3 and Fig. 4). By choosing a particular connection configuration, one can decide the size of data that can be exchanged between the

transfer means and the search means. As illustrated by an example in the specification, if the maximum data size that can be transferred is 128 bits. Then, depending on the connection configuration between the transfer and search means, a data width of either 128, 64, or 32 bits can be realized. (Specification ¶ [0047]-[0054]). Thus, depending on the connection configuration chosen, "the maximum width of the data exchangeable between transfer engines 30 and search engines 40 differs and the data bus used for data transmission also differs in width." (Specification ¶ [0054]).

The Examiner has asserted that as disclosed in the Huang patent, the MAC/Data Queue (Fig. 3, 211, 213) taken together and Address Table/Router (212, 214) taken together represent the recited transfer means and the search means, respectively, of claims 1, 10, and 11. (Office action page 3). The Applicants respectfully traverse.

The Huang patent is generally directed to sorting and transmitting data packets in a network system. The Huang patent discloses a scheme in which the source address and destination address of an incoming data packet are extracted by the MAC (media access controller, 211, Fig. 3) and forwarded to the router (214). In other words, the router does not perform any extraction of these addresses, but rather is fed the addresses by the MAC.

The router then compares the received source address to a set of stored source addresses in the address table 214. If the source address of the packet does not match any of the stored addresses, the router initiates a new entry in the address table by creating a new address learning frame (NALF) and the packet is subsequently broadcasted to the received destination address by the router. (Col 4: lines 63-66 and Col 5: lines 1-18). If the source address of the packet matches a stored address in the address table, the packet is broadcasted to the destination address received by the router.

A thorough review of the Huang patent fails to reveal any mention of an instance where "a connection configuration determines the number of input and output terminals between the transfer means and the search means." Furthermore, the Huang patent does not even contemplate data size configuration. The MAC/Data Queue and Address table/Router combinations disclosed in the Huang patent only transmit to and/or receive data from each other without regard to data size. Nowhere does the Huang patent disclose, "a data size transferred

between the search means and the transfer means is configurable based on the connection configuration."

Thus, the Applicants assert that the Huang patent fails to teach or suggest,
...wherein a connection configuration determines the number
of input and output terminals between the transfer means and
the search means; and
wherein a data size transferred between the search means and
the transfer means is configurable based on the connection
configuration.

Therefore, claims 1, 10, and 11 as amended are believed to be in condition for allowance. Claims 2-4 and 7-9, which depend on claim 1, and claims 12, 13, and 16-18, which depend on claim 11, are also in condition for allowance for the reasons mentioned above and for the additional elements that they recite.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe all claims now pending in this Application are in condition for allowance. The issuance of a formal Notice of Allowance at an early date is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at 650-326-2400.

Respectfully submitted,

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